

Remarks

Objection to the Abstract. A new Abstract is submitted herewith.

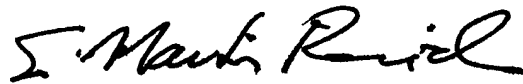
Rejection of Claims 1-29 under 37 USC § 112, second paragraph. In response to the Examiner's proposal, the applicants have amended the specification to provide clarification on the function of the elastomeric shear layer, as referenced in US 6,769,465 B2. Claims 1-27 would be allowable as a result of this correction. No new matter is introduced by this amendment. Therefore claims 1-29 should now be in a condition for allowance.

Objection to Claims 10 and 16 under 37 CFR § 1.75(c). Claims 10 and 16 have been cancelled.

Provisional Double Patenting in view of Application No. 10/757,065. During the telephone conference on September 27, 2005, the Examiner confirmed that the claim of priority from the amendment paper dated June 7, 2005 had been entered. That claim establishes the instant application ('066) as a continuation of PCT/US01/51156 filed October 29, 2001, which case is a continuation-in-part of PCT/US01/23163, filed July 19, 2001. This provisionally cited application, 10/757,065 ('065) is, in fact, a continuation of PCT/US01/23163. Thus, the instant application '066 is a continuation-in-part of the cited application '065. That said, although the new matter contained in the instant application '066 has a later effective filing date for the purpose patentability, the patent term associated with all of the claims of '066 would reference to the earliest domestic priority date, July 19, 2001. Furthermore, had the claims of applications '065 and '066 been filed in a single application, a restriction would have been highly likely between the claims to the support ring itself and the claims to the composition of matter. A subsequently filed divisional application on the non-elected claims could not have been subject to a double patenting rejection. For these reasons, the applicant believes that the double patenting rejection is now moot.

It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks now place all claims in a condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the Applicant's attorney as indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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